

LEANDER

AND

HERO.

A

TRAGEDY.

Thomas Horde, Jun^r.

——— *Letique miserrima dicar*
Causa comesque tui.

OVID.

O multum miseri meus illiusque parentes,
Ut quos certus amor, quos hora novissima junxit
Componi tumulo non inuideat eodem.

OVID.

L O N D O N,

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PROLOGUE.

AS the gay, lively autumns disappear,
And brumal sadness fills the closing year,
The comic muse to blithe Parnassus fled,
Hath sent a tragic sister in her stead.
The buskin'd virgin quits Bæotia's strand,
And pays a visit to fair freedom's land.
Newly arriv'd, descending 'twas her lot
Through night's dark veil to spy a rural cot.
From the small casement, a faint, glimmering light
Presents a musing student to her sight.
With folded arms, and downcast eyes he moves,
And calls for succour to the sacred groves.
Invok'd, our well-pleas'd Goddess inward rush'd,
Our modest Author knew his Queen and blush'd.

On what new plan, quoth she, doth fancy rove?
To whom the trembling Bard, I treat of Love.
Of Love! stale topic, can the valet Stage
With thread-bare garment please this modish age?
Our friend reply'd, let none the subject spurn,
To well known tales I give a modern turn.
Your friendly aid impart to raise the dead,
And lift two lovers from a wat'ry bed.
Each several part its former body knew,
And in small space to meet perfection grew,
They here attend within to pleasure you.
But if regardless of their patron's fame,
You think this love pretence be but a name,
If to their woes you no attention pay,
From your tribunal seal the fatal nay,
And to infernal Grubstreet doom the play.

Dramatis Personæ.

M E N.

OMAR, King of *Abydos*.

LEANDER his Son, in Love with *Hero*.

SORONNUS, his Friend.

ARMELIUS, King of *Sestos*, Father to *Hero*.

ALTEMANZOR, Prince of *Persepolis*, in
Love with *Hero*.

Guards, Lords, Attendants, Ruffians, &c.

W O M E N.

HERO, Daughter to *Armelius*, in Love with
Leander.

AMORISSA, her Confidant.



LEANDER and HERO.

A

T R A G E D Y.

ACT I.

SCENE the First.

Scene an inward Apartment in Armelius's Palace.

Enter Hero and Amorissa.

AMORISSA:



ASTE not thyself, my better part,
with unavailing sorrows, nor let those
sullen tears deface that tender frame,
the gods so lovely form'd; let wrinkled
age severely grave, denounce the joyous
sweets that life affords, and in some lonely cell,
where horrors reign, devote its future days to
pensive care.

HERO. Such sad retreat, my friend, I'd gladly
find (since all my sanguine hopes are shipwreck'd
here)

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here) but ah, what scandalous tongues may deign to prattle : what ill designing Seditious may infer, I shudder to suggest ! Perhaps, cry they, the princess screens a guilty breast by flight (and though by vulgar lips her name's rever'd) some hidden crime forbids her stay, and from the Thracian shore excites her steps.

AMOR. Seek not to cure by rash suspicious flight th' ill nourish'd seeds of baneful discontent, nor tempt the dangers of a foreign land, but through a royal mirror view the prince, and to the raging winds commit thy grief.

HERO. No. Heav'n's itself to my entreaties deaf, nor gentle zephyrs waft my sighs to him, whose godlike frame betray'd my easy heart ; at his departure nature seem'd estrang'd, my father's royal halls (like Lybian deserts teem'd with gloomy views) and as in infant chaos all the globe a mass material, wanting beauteous form ; so these detested sands appear to me, 'till great Leander (like th' almighty Jove) dispose in order all these jarring atoms, and sooth the wrangling elements to peace.

AMOR. Cease to afflict thy noble soul with such tormenting passions, since here I swear by yon majestic roof, that burnish'd dome the seat of happy gods, thy faithful friend postpones her ease for thine, for thee regardless of her sex to rove, thro' Afric's parching sands, ev'n when the furious dog-star, foe to man, from its illumin'd sphere, darts unpropitious rays ; for thee to brave the northern blasts of bleak unwholesome winds, and if she brings but one faint gleam of hope, she'll think her life of labour well repay'd.

HERO. Thanks, Amorissa, for thy kind endearments, thou offer'st every cordial to thy friend,
such

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such sympathizing aid is balm to wounded minds,
as Æsculapian drugs to mangled limbs.

AMOR. Enough of friendship and its social ties,
that binds our souls in adamantine chains; no
sooner Morpheus clos'd your watchful eyes, and
stopt the avenues of mortal sense, love's lambent
flame glides thro' your thrilling veins, th' Idalian
goddess fans the gathering fire, the Grecian vic-
tor's phantom stands confest, and lov'd Leander's
only regnant there. Your fault'ring tongue in
broken accents lisps his tender name, at length
awaken'd curse the dear delusion that tore two
faithful turtles from their nests.

HERO. Alas! thou'st rous'd a thought before
suppress'd, which in my throbbing bosom dormant
lay (blame not the scruples of an anxious woman)
this gallant prince may with his constant tears
implore the pity of some haughty maid; ay or
perchance hath plighted vows with some more
worthy she, or seeks a mate thro' wars or bloody
conquests. Th' Esonian youth forsook Medea thus,
and sought a consort in a distant realm.

AMOR. Let not the bitter fear of future ills,
possess your mind with such desponding thoughts,
but rather think the great Leander lives for you
alone, adorn'd with glorious bays he thinks his
triumph yet but half compleat, 'till you (the
mistress of the various seasons) crown his success
with th' endless springs of love.

HERO. Was power unbounded lodged in Hero's
breast, she'd far more lavish be than heav'n's great
king, that deals his blessings with unsparing
hands. I'd rear a stately temple to my prince, and
lest grim discord and her fermenting train,
shou'd haunt this peaceful structure with their fury,
I'd garnish all its tops with emblematic peace, and

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round its confines plant an olive grove, whilst as a priestess prostrate at the shrine, I'd offer meet libations to the God, and at his altars mix my tears with incense.

AMOR. What pains or dangers scare embolden'd youth, whose hearts are pierc'd by Cupid's golden shafts? the thund'rer thus forsakes Olympus' top, his deadly bolts and terroure laid aside, and on Phœnicia's plains appears a bull, now tempts his brother's waters with his prize, and thro' the foaming billows bears the maid.

HERO. Amazing changes far more strange than this, my roving fancy knew, from that blest hour (mark it ye sacred powers in fate's records) when great Leander, like the Delphic god, darted on this small spot immortal rays, beneath his gilded car th' illumin'd sands, as in Pactolus' stream imbu'd, with yellow tincture grac'd the crowded strand, the grateful virgins strew'd the sacred way, which with it's flow'ry odour seem'd to vie, with gay-deck'd Tempe in Thessalian vales, a hoary train of pious matrons mov'd in solemn pomp, whilst all the streets with acclamations rung, the splitting vallies catch'd the ecchoing sound, and Io Pæans fill'd the starry dome.

AMOR. But when night's curtains of a fable hue were drawn, and Sol's great charioteer began to seek his wat'ry bed, and rest his tired coursers in the main, fatigu'd with daily sports the revelling youth, carouse full measures to their conqu'ring arms, and waste the midnight taper in delights; by holy priests the slaughter'd victims fall, and stain the hallow'd knives with purple gore.

HERO. Name not that hateful night whose thievish hours, depriv'd thy wretched friend of
hope's

hope's last dawn, ill-omen'd night, which bore the dire report of curst Persepolis, who in firm compact sought the father's friendship, and the daughter's love. Great Paphos' queen abjur'd th' unequal yoke, my flinty heart disdain'd th' ungrateful theme, and prepossest repell'd th' efforts of love; but when the lamps of triumph were extinct, the moon with blunted horns forsook the sky, and morning mounted on its saffron wheels, with streaks of light adorn'd the eastern hill, as the Titanian goddess I appear'd, attended with a train of rural nymphs. My careless bow, from off my shoulder hung, and in a polish'd quiver arrows keen, straight thro' the throng with eager haste I press'd, to view great Omar's son in martial state, who seiz'd the bark with regal trappings drest, and thro' the liquid waves with brazen beaks, the wary seamen sought their native soil. Cold drops of sweat o'erspread my trembling joints, the trickling fountains streaming from my eyes, bedew'd my purple tunic with their moisture.

AMOR. Your royal fire, the paragon of heav'n, adds to his princely worth parental love, implore protection from the gods and him, nor shall you sue in vain. Proud Altemanzor vanquish'd shall recede, nor Hymen's altar blaze with spurious fire.

HERO. Oh may the poisonous floods of dreary Styx, or Pluto's gloomy hall receive my ghost, immur'd in confines of eternal night, e'er force shall drag me to his loath'd embrace. Or if the triple sisters have decreed, still on their fatal distaff to retain my vital thread unspun, oh may some pitying power a friend to love, my body fix, like rooted Daphne, to her mother earth, like her to fly th' insulting tyrant thro' the mazy groves,
and

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and by the pinions of the sportive boy upborn
elude the rape.

Remote from beaten tracks in pathless way,
Thro' bushy dingles I may chance to stray,
With trembling feet, torn vest, and flowing hair,
With lawless lust the dire seducer near,
In the moist earth my harden'd parts may root,
And from the sappy stem new berries shoot,
Sprout forth green laurels from each pregnant
bough,
Till cropt by Omar's son to grace his brow.

[*Exeunt.*]

SCENE II.

A stately hall in Armelius's palace.

Enter Armelius and Altemanzor.

ALT. If lofty tow'rs of architect superb, and
sumptuous dwellings elevate a state; if rule and
order civilize mankind, and in a close cement
unite the world, or teach the rude barbarian
lib'ral art, sure Sestos claims the wonder of the
age: fame shall convey to distant climes her gol-
den laws, Astræa's self shall leave her native skies
to govern here, nor e'er regret the seat she left
behind.

ARM. Each little turret with its humble spire,
receives a recent lustre in itself, and as the Mace-
donian mountains lost in clouds, so Thracian
roofs with Ossa seem to vie, their tops ætherial
catch the falling nectar, stain'd with the dropping
of fair Hebe's cup, since Altemanzor deigns such
lavish praise. In arts unpractis'd by plain nature's
discipline, I sway my subjects with a peaceful
scepter, and fix dominion's right by just command.

ALT.

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ALT. Thus modest merit waves its tribute due,
with self-felt approbation well repay'd, the prin-
cess too on virtue's prop reclin'd, transcends her
airy sex, and in her father's bright example lives.
Blandusia's purling stream transparent thus, thro'
marble channels rowls its liquid splendor, and
with its fountain essence glads the field.

ARM. My darling daughter like a tender plant,
was deeply rooted in a fertile soil, which by the
busy weeder's hand was from excrescence freed.
The rising stalk produc'd the promis'd gain,
And honest culture pay'd the sower's pain.

ALT. That sprig when growing from the spread-
ing branch, sure ne'er was nourish'd by arboreous
juice, some goddess pure adopts the happy tree,
and with ambrosial succour aids its boughs.

ARM. We claim no kindred to the pow'rs
above, but from a race of Thracian kings de-
riv'd, we rule Mavortian fields by ancient laws
prescrib'd, and wish to tread the paths our great
forefathers trod. My female offspring in succeed-
ing reign, match'd with some monarch of the
neighbouring soil, shall fill the Sestian throne
acknowledg'd queen.

ALT. When Hero rules let kings their tri-
bute pay,
And gazing princes own despotic sway,
Since scepter'd beauty all mankind obey.
If my pretences to so rich a prize,
Are meet and just in a fond father's eyes,
At her bright fane I'll adoration pay,
And at her feet my crown and kingdom lay.

ARM. By frequent application you have won
my slow consent; till now unfix'd I waver'd in
my choice; at length this hour determination
seal'd, and Altemanzor is confirm'd my son.

ALT.

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ALT. May gracious heav'n from this one bounteous act, show'r down unnumber'd blessings on your head, and teach the fair to lend a pitying ear, whilst I in lowly posture kiss the earth, and from the balm of love entreat relief.

Suadela hear, if soft persuasion's thine,
And arm thy vot'ry's lips with speech divine.
Great Maia's son forsake Arcadia's vales,
And leave thy bleating flocks for love's soft tales.
Each mental gulf with thy caduceus charm,
Each vital part with love's bright image warm.
Blest with success I'll warble grateful lays,
And load thy temple with immortal bays. [*Exit.*]

Armeliuſ alone.

He's gone, and as he went methinks his disencumber'd soul, as tho' releas'd from off a pond'rous weight, ſat light and jocund: Lucinda thus aſſiſts the matron's throes, and with a ſafe deliv'ry glads her mind.

Enter Hero.

HERO. Hail to the ſovereign lord of Seſtoſ' town! Hail to the worthy author of my life! What tho' my downy couch yields no repoſe, nor drowſy poppies cloſe my eyes to reſt; what tho' no pleaſing ſlumbers will reſreſh my troubled thoughts with ſoporific eaſe, yet I'll forget th' inquietude of night, and welcome morn, tho' clad in ruſſet weeds, that gives the bleſt occaſion to preſent obedience, love, and duty to my fire.

ARM. Riſe, daughter, riſe, to your fond father's arms; may meekneſs, truth, and juſtice mould

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mould thy tender years, and to mature perfection train my child; but say what nightly visions haunt thy bed, or what curst spectre with its haggard look, depos'd thy reason, and usurp'd its seat.

HERO. Alas! no portents dire affright the just, nor chattering pies with harsh forebodings scare. This senseless giddy herd of fulsome slaves, who with exotic riot fill the streets, and quaff full goblets to the jolly god, tinging each marble pavement with excess, invade the quiet city with their broils, and in their midnight revels fright repose.

ARM. Behold great Altemanzor's native worth, that soars above this groveling, headstrong croud; his eyes with gentle drops of pity flow, to see makind in one continued round (like old Silenus nodding on his ass) pursue the paths of brutal folly thus, and with licentious orgies blast their fame. Th' afflicted youth, with moody discontent, beholds his people's shame, and cries, Not Mars, but Comus governs here.

HERO. When unaw'd faction with gigantic steps, o'erstrides this city with intemp'rate lust, why stands this tame and moral prince aloof, or sets the dignity of empire by, to spare his guilty subjects for their crimes.

ARM. Inclined to mercy, by sound precepts drawn, and fair example he propos'd to win, this revel rout ensnar'd by magic vice; which failing, quick constraint shall order bring, and ev'ry vassal shall due homage pay, to equity and right. But now thine ear prepare for softer sounds, and let thy breast tenacious of its good, receive a father's boon with modest joy.

HERO. Mute as a querist at Apollo's shrine, I wait th' important counsel of the god.

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ARM. From youth's gay summit to the vale of life I move in fleet descent, and niggard nature sparing of her male, has made me rich and blest in thee alone. I'd wish to see thee mated to a prince, whose godlike actions time's revolving years shou'd in her choicest annals make record. Persep'lis prince, for noble deeds renown'd, with panting bosom and affection sweet, entreats fair Hero's love, and seeks alliance to her royal worth. Persep'lis town, far-fam'd for neighing steeds, Inur'd to war, with their victorious bands, Shall add new conquest to the Thracian lands. Mars and my son the glory shall divide, And Hebrus banks o'erflow with golden tide. Think not those blessings can be purchas'd dear, Since honour's self shall fix her standard here. Prepare the sacred rites, make no reply, Since gods themselves approve the nuptial tie.

[Exit.

HERO. The gods indeed approve the nuptial tie, where hearts well-pair'd receive the pleasing yoke; where forms, affections, parity of love, with joint assent compleat the blissful state.

But when the Lemnian god and Cyprus queen, Unequal in young Cupid's lists are seen, Inverted nature loaths the name of wife, Then wretched Hero shun the wedded life, Till great Leander in love's sacred porch, Shall with his own refulgence light the torch.

[Exit.

End of the First Act.

ACT



A C T II.

SCENE I. Scene *Abydos*.

A garden, with a distant view of a pleasant field.

Enter Leander and Soronnu.

LEANDER.

NOW all things smile, and ev'ry new-blown grove, proud of the honours of the sylvan god, with fruits and foliage deck'd, are seen in verdant hue; the deadly cypress, with dejected boughs, draws a faint lustre from the neighbouring trees, and half forgets to mourn; the spangled meads, with herbage fresh replete, afford sweet dewlap to the lowing herd, and grassy tufts promote the keeper's ease, who tunes his slender pipe to rural lays, and joins in concert with the feather'd choir. The sportive graces with their careless zones, lead up the wanton dance with measures quick, and plucking roses from the fragrant bush, perfume their tresses with a flow'ry wreath. Why sends not Jove his much-lov'd heifer here, to browse the willow and its bitter leaf; least scornful damsels with its pliant twigs, begird the faithful temples of the swain, and leave him drooping, chearless, and alone.

SOR.

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SOR. No nymphs instructed in love's wily snares, extend their fraudulent nets to draw th' unwary in, but harmless rusticks with alternate foot, beat the resounding earth for your return; the grots, woods, fields, in nature's liv'ry drest, present their blooming odours to her master-piece, and doubly blossom at the victor's touch: But why shou'd sportive clowns our wonder raise, since all Abydos' court in merry feast, to musick soft incline a willing ear; the clarion shrill proclaims afar your triumph to the clouds, which echo back again th' applauding sounds; the streets with pompous jubilee are throng'd, whilst ev'ry subject blesteth Omar's heir, and pays his thanks as tributes to his worth.

LEAN. Alas! those modes, and outward shapes of joy, all honours paid to thrones, and princely pride, procure no comfort to the suff'ring soul; poor painted ensigns to a bleeding heart. I've search'd the inmost regions of my mind, explor'd with caution ev'ry secret fount, from whence in troubled streams desponding waters break fair reason's dam, and like a latent mole will undermine, with passage most obscure content's sweet basis and its rocky found.

SOR. Let not th' unruly billows of despair, dash your devoted bark on shoals of woe, but still these boist'rous whirlwinds of the soul, and with the trident of a firm resolve, appease the raging waves of fruitless grief. What though Pandora's box o'erflows with ills, well lin'd with mischief, foe to human kind, the friendly hope unto its center cleaves, nor leaves its mistress aidless or forlorn.

LEAN. First bid the vulture quit the frigid mount, and let Prometheus' liver grow secure,
who

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who from th' empyreal substance dar'd to draw,
the fiery balls like meteors thro' the sky, and
give his molten image instant life; or bid Ixion,
groaning on the wheel, expect to riot in the sweets
of love, and clasp the haughty Juno to his breast;
or let th' Eolian wretch rejoice to think, eternal
frost shall fix the rolling stone, firm to the sum-
mit of the fatal hill, e'er bid thy luckless friend
hope better times, or court his distant fortune
to be kind.

SOR. What task so hard that mortal means
cannot effect: By much persuasion we the stub-
born bend, by gifts and presents we the vulgar
gain, by wit superior we the crafty win, and by
rough force oppos'd subdue the brave; what ad-
verse powers then (like malignant stars) with aspect
cloudy kill your darling hope.

LEAN. To thee, Soronnus, I unbosom all, to
thee discover all those pungent goads, that gall
my tortur'd mind. What if the king, by blood
and pow'r made strong, and with his pressing sub-
jects should exert compulsive acts, and plight my
faith by proxy to a mate, whom views of state or
caprice shall exalt to earthly grandeur and Abydos
throne; or if by long petition overcome, the fa-
ther fond of free born choice approves this fo-
reign flame, and grants our love, a vaunting
rival with her presence grac'd, shall make his
court with such attractive glance, that charms
the list'ning maid to hear him vow.

SOR. Oh may the bias'd gods from heav'n
look down, and nature's tender organs plead your
cause, secure the princess to your doating heart,
and with intrinsic value crown your joy.

LEAN. Sure Saturn's son of his creation proud,
denies this goddess to a gazing world, and in

B

etherial

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etherial codes enrolls her name, reserv'd to flourish in its native sky. Exub'rant virtue thus pleuretic grows, and in its own abundance dies.

SOR. No. May the gods protract her stay on earth, and dedicate your royal passion to the fair, a gift well worthy life; nay pure Diana's-self shall lose the choicest leader of her train, and in conubial fetters bind the nymph. But say what rival on yon sea-beat coast, in love's soft musick, and sweet concert school'd with halcyon notes, and oft repeated sounds (like Orpheus' strains) supplants my lord, or with officious wooing seeks her heart.

LEAN. By order led, I will reveal, how Altemanzor fam'd for wealth and arms, by the loud trumpet of report extoll'd, bred under roofs of subtilty and guile, embolden'd too by lands increase and gold, that yellow slave, that mock heroic good, stands in the roll of suitors, primal lord.

SOR. Thou best of masters, open-hearted friend, hence let me 'rase th' imprints of past events, and leave thy counsels in my breast alone.

LEAN. When hostile valour ineffectual prov'd, and far beneath this weighty sword, each sordid vassal cring'd and hugg'd his chains: with reeking trophies of a new ceased war, and palms presented by our glad allies, I enter'd Sestos' court in formal shew; when starting from my chariot, thought I saw Jove's daughter, goddess of the silver stream, for so the virgin deity appear'd; till something wond'ring at th' equestrian train, compos'd of damsels watchful of her gait, I spy'd a dazzling quiver by her side, well stor'd with piercing arrows tipt with gore: my greedy eyes absorbing all the light, drew fresh supplies from her's,

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her's, which blest the world with flowing streams of day, plac'd in those spheres vicegerents of the sun; conscious of worth superior she look'd down, and with a coral visage grac'd the sand: her lovely cheeks were dy'd with glowing red, as crimson hangings in pale gall'ry plac'd add to the polish'd marble-blushing shades.

SOR. That meek demeanour join'd with innate price, exalts your mistress far above the fair: her sex's mirror, and her country's pride.

LEAN. Her lover's torment and her father's hope. Oh let me act again those mental scenes, and with those graceful tresses I admir'd, in comely ringlets on my finger curl'd, like wreaths of ivy round poetic brows: her beauteous shoulder with the lily fair, in competition stood; each art'ry with mellif'rous essence fraught, and ev'ry pore distill'd prolific sweet. And shall a faucy rival, big with joy and rapture most sublime, bask in the sunshine of the charming she; like to the polar serpent in the sky, when by Apollo's genial ray reviv'd.

SOR. Hath my Leander learnt that Altemanzor moves his earnest suit, and begs this demi-goddefs, with his sighs, to accept Persep'lis throne, and share his crown.

LEAN. The night preceding that unhappy day when I display'd my banner on the ship, resolv'd to bid defiance to the main, and seek my native clime with plying oar, I sent a trusty servant to enquire what warlike youth, with awful step, stalk'd thro' the palace with exulting mein, and seem'd more like a monarch than a guest: the faithful vassal with swift gliding feet return'd, and stabb'd his master with these poniard words; Prince of Persep'lis, Altemanzor nam'd, with

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undissembled kindness makes his court, and to Armelius' daughter proffers love.

Enter Omar.

OMAR. When raging combat and it's din subside, and fierce Bellona smooths her wrinkled brow, and gladsome mirth confirms th' establish'd peace, why seeks my son this solitary shade, to share his joys with one selected mate; why shuns the victor his caressing friend, whose praise and homage wou'd new lustre add to triumph' self, and make his bed of promis'd ease more sweet.

LEAN. And are these landskip scenes to peace a foe; or dwells content alone within the crowd: why quits the master of the silver bow, Jove's pleasing banquet and his fellow gods (who fill their goblets to the conquering youth, that pierc'd th' envenom'd Python with his shafts) but in retirement of the sheltering wood, to sooth his war-sick mind, and welcome rest.

OMAR. But soon a god more potent far than he, bereav'd of self-fruition and repose, Latona's son for arms for science fam'd, whose heart susceptible felt the growing flame, fann'd by the wanton wings of Venus son; if thou like Phœbus know'st th' effects of love, behold thy father stands prepar'd to bless thy union with a gracious nod, if that thy happy genius did direct thy soul's most fervent wishes to the maid, whom I have found surpassing all the fair, and by a fixt adoption seal'd my own.

LEAN. 'Tis true, like Phœbus, I no stranger am to love's all-piercing shafts, that rack the mind; and ah, like him in fond election curst, I trace the dear delusion that misleads my wand'ring steps:

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steps : like to the feet of some poor simple clown,
whom fiery exhalations of the night, with fraudulent
dance, persuade to leave his way.

OMAR. For bliss substantial quit this fleeting
shade. Behold the shining beauties of the court,
excell'd by none in charms or sprightly wit ; cast
round thine eyes, and cull from nature's sweets
that lovely fair whom most thy soul applauds,
perhaps thy father may approve thy choice.

LEAN. And shall Leander cease to doat on her,
whose fond impression touch'd his youthful heart ;
or can he waver doubtful in his love, since time
and absence with united force prove that the dar-
ling object of his wish, with undivided empire
reigns alone.

OMAR. By dint of reason and despotic sway,
o'er all the sev'ral regions of the mind, this pas-
sion sure may yield to self command. Use shall
maintain the freedom you acquir'd. A second
damsel of superior grace, a virgin cast in fair per-
fection's mould, on whom the gods with envy
may look down, shall with her matchless beauty
bless my son ; bequeath her virtue to his princely
seed, and when her glorious race of life is run,
convey her royal worth to distant times.

SOR. [*Aside.*] I fear this friendly parley is de-
sign'd a mournful prelude to a tragic storm.

OMAR. The bright Sapphira, of unblemish'd
life, from noble kings deriv'd, whose kindred
blood flows richly in her veins, belov'd by all but
most approv'd by me, hail'd by our subjects next
succeeding queen, shall wed Leander.—[*Leander
starts and looks confused.*]—Alas ! my son, why
art thou thus aghast, with that dejected look and
visage wan ; why heaves thy bosom with unwonted
weight, that prison fraught with sighs, whose

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narrow passage lacks sufficient vent, for each unwelcome guest, that crowd life's portals with a swift advance? Thus the rude winds in earthly caverns pent, roar round the confines of the gloomy goal, and court the day's access thro' gaping chinks.

LEAN. Ev'n as the potent god their fury calm'd with his imperious touch, so may a father sooth my troubled soul, and with the balm of mercy heal his son. Behold with trembling knees I lowly bend, and beg but one poor boon of royal grace: Use no compulsion with a wretched prince, whose heart's entangled in the nets of love; stand neutral there, and let free choice my only portion be. Advance a stranger to Abydos' throne, divest your hapless child of empire's hope, make rich some subject with my vict'ry's spoil, but leave my mind sole mistress of her self, nor bind my free-born soul unus'd to thrall.

OMAR. Have I for this thy youth to virtue train'd, and form'd thy tender years to godlike rule; have I thy heart with fame and glory fir'd, and sought to satisfy thy thankless mind with golden fruit, the pride of beauty's tree. I fear some Syren, skill'd in magic spells, allures thy reason from its native orb; whilst thou neglectful of the choicest growth, hast glean'd the garden for a sorry blight, content alone on offal trash to feed.

SOR. Wrong not, most mighty sir, my generous lord, or think his gallant soul can ere vouchsafe, to seek alliance with a base-born maid. A noble princess, of enchanting form——

OMAR. [*Interrupting him.*] Peace, minion, peace, thy servile office learn, and as a vassal shew submissive lips; salute his sandals with a fawning kifs,

kiss; accost with flattery this thy idol god, but ah! take heed, nor brave an angry king; or by my great forefathers I will hurl such bolts of earthly thunder on thy head, that pain of racks shall be but slight to thine.—[*To Leander.*] Of your presumptuous love I somewhat heard; and since persuasion and a fire's command are insufficient to procure a change, or bring your stubborn temper to comply, if in the course of one revolving moon, no new resolves are found to heal the breach, I'll feed the hungry ravens with my food, and with my wealth adorn the pompous gods; whom I'll invoke to show'r their plagues upon thee, and in th' expected harvest of thy love to sow the baleful tares of jealous hate; whilst thou forlorn shalt mourn thy fatal ills, and curse the wisdom that arriv'd too late. [*Exit.*]

LEAN. At length the dreadful conflict's past. The vaunting Cupid, with his rosy feet, spurns sacred duty, and applauds my love; and with affection's shield repels these imprecations of a cruel king, for whom I'd spend the last remains of life; and shew my zeal in any cause but this. Why droops my second self, what pensive care sits heavy on his brow. [*To Soronnius musing.*]

SOR. Alas! my lord, consider where we are: each whisper forcing thro' the neighbouring grove, perhaps our friendly conference may betray. Might I advise, we'd leave this hateful land, and e'er to-morrow's sun declining droops, we'd view fair Hero in her father's court, and seek the fair occasion to be blest.

LEAN. But how, Soronnius, shall we pass the flood?

SOR. Near to the briny shore there lies a bark, whose starving master Neptune scanty pays this

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will I hire, and drest in fit disguise; the stars and moon shall guide our nightly course, and safe conduct us to the Thracian shore.

LEAN. I'll to the army 'till th' appointed time, and in some busy trifles 'scape' suspect; mean while each minute 'till the dear one comes, will seem a vast eternity to me.

SOR. Straight from this haven of hell we'll steer, and seek th' elysium of almighty love.

But now farewell, and blest in friendship's store,
To night perchance we meet to part no more.

[*Exeunt.*]

SCENE II. Scene *Sestos.*

An anti-chamber in Armelius's palace.

Enter Hero.

HERO. Why did the gods mankind free agents make, and why allot poor women useless will; since force unhallow'd can with rude constraint, impose its loathsome tasks to make us slaves. What is the princess but the drudge of state, a needful tool to give the vulgar ease. The tender hind forsakes her doating dam, charm'd to the covert by some harmless male, and by implanted instinct doth receive the fond caresses of her fav'rite stag. Each rural lass, enrich'd by virtue's dow'r, to some plain fancy'd peasant yields a bride: but we, a royal mark for fortune's bow, receive her vengeful shafts and greatly bleed; that swains and subjects may in safety sit, and owe their rest to our majestic wreck.

Enter

Enter Altemanzor.

ALT. What sounds divine allure my wand'ring steps; or do I tread on some enchanted ground. Sure 'tis the mournful Philomel doth tune: no, 'tis a queen with more engaging voice, (for ah sweet musick's in thy plaintive notes) say if thy tender heart strings jar. Lo, as a skilful artist, I —

HERO. [*Interrupts.*] It is thy skilful art distracts my soul; thy presence all her organs doth untune. If thou in pity wou'dst attempt my cure, fly from my sight, no more offend my eyes; thy absence only can restore my peace.

ALT. Ah! kill me with a weapon, not with frowns; and when in death's last agonies I gasp, one tender glance shall charm the fatal steel; my hov'ring soul shall wait for one kind smile, then leave its wretched prison and depart.

HERO. Live, Altemanzor! I conjure thee live, for some more happy maid, and feast with love; but vex not Hero with a plaintive tale, whose heart's dear treasure is expended all, nor can afford thy flame the least return.

ALT. Did I for this forsake Persep'lis court, and scorn each rival princess for your sake; did I for this arrive on Sestos' shore, to woo with tears your father's slow consent; for this to number heavy groans by night, and curse the tedious day for passing slow. And lo, my gen'rous suff'rings now repaid, with this poor phrase, Alas! I cannot love.

HERO. 'Tis true by constant suit you did obtain a father's leave to court his hapless child. On me were laid his harsh commands to love;
but

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but ah ! that doleful mandate came too late ; nor shall a fire divide a heart and hand, which are united by the bond of love, and own one common lord.

ALT. Ah ! change thy deadly purpose, cruel fair, nor blast my flatt'ring hopes with proud disdain. Accept my crown and reign Persep'lis' queen, I'll glut thy soul with power, wealth, and fame ; contending nobles shall outstrip the wind, to bear thy sacred orders thro' the realm ; the priest shall rob the shrines to deck my love, and ev'ry smiling god approve the theft. Myself will lead the phalanx to the field, under thy beauty's banner will I fight, and safe returning from the dusty plain, I'll barter all my palms for one kind look.

HERO. How can'st thou, monster, hope kind looks from me ; wou'd that mine eyes to basilisks might turn, and strike thee dead with their envenom'd beams : shalt thou with tinsel bribes entrap my mind, and gain affection with a gilded bait ; think'st thou my free-born soul can ever yield, to plight it's faith for empty glitt'ring toys, or sell its freedom for that bubble fame, to wed the man whom most on earth I hate.

ALT. If so, bright princess, you might spare your scorn, and ease my torture with sweet pity's balm. But since contempt sits low'ring on your brow, and scornful features damp my ardent vows, I'll to the king, and urge my just complaint. Some fawning fool, in flatt'ry's nursery bred, hath with a silken tale traduc'd my love : but henceforth, madam, let him shun the light, forsake fair Sestos' town, and absent mourn ; or by the pangs of disappointed hope, this steel shall hew a passage

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passage to his heart, and rout his passion from the bloody core. *Exit*

HERO. May thy perfidious rage with doubled force, back on thyself recoil; thou blank of man, made by some novice god that mimick'd Jove, and in a human body heedless lodg'd a fatal fury's soul to plague the world. — Eyes, from this hideous monster turn away, and inward bend your light, to view the mind, where my Leander's beauteous image dwells: gaze on the darling object till you pall, and by its lustre, all your rays grow dim, and every fleshy fibre lose its power. — Wou'd ye, kind fates, but grant this prince to me, one common fortune shou'd attend us both; and when we'd shaken off this earthly veil, the queen of beauty and her potent fire, might weigh our constant faith in heav'nly scale, and glad our souls with full profusion of Elysian bliss, nor blame those fond caresses we bestow:

Till Juno-self our perfect love shall see,
And quit th' imperial seat to rival me.

[*Exit.*]

End of the Second Act.

ACT



A C T III.

SCENE I. *Scene a field near Armelius's palace.**Enter Altemanzor and a Ruffian.*

ALTEMANZOR.

HERE rest awhile in private to confer: told not the trusty spy my firm intent, and wou'd you only learn from me, the surest means to gain the wish'd-for end.

RUFF. Your herald only with ambiguous phrase declar'd some deed of danger to be done. Lo, as a slave I wait your royal will, in ought resolv'd to act as you command.

ALT. First let me try the touchstone for thy faith.—Say art thou current villain, true born rogue, coined in the mint of vice, unmix'd with honest metal in the mine; if so these plain instructions make thy own, and when their substance passes into act, know that a noble meed shall crown thy toil.

RUFF. I'm all and even more than you surmise. To 'scape the buffets of oppressing want, I left dame justice and her lean abode, resolv'd on honest fools to take repose. Three well-known comrades maim'd by fortune's gripe, this present hour's result impatient wait: their swords or wily plots insure success.

With

With me they'll jointly strive, and boldly dare,
What from your lips alone I'd willing hear.

ALT. Without more prelude then, there stands
a wood, whose pendent branches with their leafy
gloom, form for the savage boar a shady den.
The king and princess thither will repair, soon as
the early cock salutes the day, to spend the
laughing hours of morn in chace: if then per-
chance the royal maid shou'd stray, or in the
mazy thicket lose her friends, seize the reluctant
dame with eager haste, by far the noblest prey
the woods afford. This paper marks the limits of
a cave, whose ancient top's o'erspread with downy
moss; within 'tis carv'd by nature's lib'ral hand,
and fram'd for golden scenes of private joy.
Here bear the screaming captive safe in bonds,
dispatch some comrade to confirm my bliss, then
drain my treasure to reward thy faith.

RUFF. My zeal's no more profess'd by idle speech;
my hand henceforth shall shew my duteous love.

[Exit Ruffian.]

ALT. Now let the scoffing virgin dwell secure,
dream on the chaste delights that love procures,
'till rous'd from sleep by unrelenting hands, she
rails at lawless man, and blames the gods, that
keep no thund'ring stores to punish lust. Un-
thinking fool; the gods delight in rape, and Jove
himself's more fam'd for amorous theft, than
driving Saturn from the realms above, fixing his
tott'ring throne to rule the world: like him I'll
surfeit with the feast of love, and gorge each
dainty sense with beauty's food. Art shall supply
the place of pow'r supreme, and gain the prize
by unresisted guile. My tow'ring eagle sent in
quest of prey, shall with his noble talons grasp
the game, tho' fierce Hesperian dragons guard it
round.

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round. Tho' watchful Argus with his hundred eyes, keeps constant vigils to protect the fair, my trusty Hermes with his golden pipe shall charm each passion to a soft repose, and in sleep's cradle rock each jaded sense.—Luxuriant fancy makes me more than man.

Designs like these a godlike spirit prove,
And make Persep'lis' prince another Jove.

[Exit.

SCENE II. *A wood.*

Enter Leander and Soronnu.

LEAN. How sweet is contemplation to the mind! for this the hermit quits the noisy crowd, and laughs at crowns, the sport of children kings; for this he seeks the verdant flow'ry lawns, proud of his homely satchel fill'd with roots, and at some neighbouring fountain slakes his thirst. Each princely banquet he with scorn rejects, and seeks the soul's ambrosia, sweet content.

SOR. For this Leander left Abydos' court, and in the friendly cover of the night, invokes each heav'nly power to aid her cause. Four sacred letters grace the lofty trees, whose tender bark the deep impression bear, the dear retainers of fair Hero's name. Such sweet employment sooths the love-sick mind; but shall my prince in such inglorious ease neglect the Sestian court, nor claim the maid, till his fond rival wears the precious gem, and cries, O world, behold this earthly star, and match its wond'rous splendor if you can.

LEAN. Think'st thou with sloth inactive I will stay, or fill this lonely place with piteous moan. To-morrow, swift as light'ning will I move, and prove my ardent zeal by nimble step. Haste,
find

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find some rural cottage near the sea, there will I lodge to night, and strive to rest; soon as the sun shall brave yon ruddy east, in pompous habit I'll explore the town. Mean while these shades afford a cool retreat, my pond'ring soul doth each associate shun, and needs self-contemplation to be blest.

SOR. Adieu, brave prince; may each propitious pow'r attend your sacred feet, with pious care watch all your actions with officious love, and guard your royal life 'till my return. [Exit.]

LEAN. Let me awhile survey thee, sacred grove, where every lonely peasant loves to tread, and weave fresh chaplets for his mistress' brow. Why was I not in some poor village bred, doom'd ne'er to know the pain of regal state, which curbs our hopes with disappointment's rein, and galls ambition's courser with its bit. What secret pleasures can from grandeur spring, since all her sons depriv'd of free accord, in painful bondage drag their weary steps. Oh peaceful tree, extend thy branching arms, and form a bower luxuriant o'er my head, such as might shame the gaudy palace roof, and call its curious sculpture needles art. Thou dear retirement made for love and me, here let me sooth the anguish of my soul, here let each ruffled sense serenely doze. Thou friendly forest, oh my bounteous host, shew thy disquiet guest some lonely den, and yield refreshing slumber to his care.

[Exit.]

SCENE III. *A distant part of the wood.*

Enter Hero and Armelius.

ARM. Proud of the spoils of chace, the lusty youth recounts the sports and dangers that are past,

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past, and in description of the winding boar, relates the pleasures of the dewy morn ; while we, sequester'd from the busy train, devote the present hour to private speech.

HERO. Deaf to the sound of harmony divine, tho' skill'd Amphion tun'd his golden reed, I'd greedy catch my father's falling words, and treasure all his counsels in my mind.

ARM. The solid stone is worn by constant rain, and heav'n itself's by much entreaty won ; and if thy frozen will, congeal'd by hate, shall kindly melt its hoar in duty's thaw, receive the noble guest, and reign a queen. In humble posture I'll invoke the gods t' extend your wide dominion o'er the world, and crown your envied age with splendid peace.

HERO. Oh dwell no more on this ungrateful theme, but weigh th' event of such unhappy tie. When pairs discordant are together yok'd, and firmly join'd in adamantine bonds, each hapless wretch will tug the galling chain, which naught but death itself can e'er dissolve. What then is greatness but a foe to rest ? What wealth or power then to fighting slaves, but like a feast prepar'd for dying men, whom fate with near approach forbids to eat.

ARM. Thy wayward inclination cannot yield, to what the numerous fair wou'd glad receive. Come cheer thy languid soul with empire's view ; behold the joys that wait on sov'reign rule ; be crown'd and dwell secure in royal ease.

HERO. And can distracted Hero thus mistake, and wear false hope an amulet for woe ? The sailor thus with feverish heat beguil'd, whose sickly fancy forms a flow'ry mead, admires the verdure of the briny surge, till tempted leaps upon the billow bank, and finds his fatal error in the deep.

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ARM. Alas! the gen'rous prince deserves a mate, that better knows the worth of true desert.

Enter Ruffians.

1st RUFF. At length the long sought deer is safely lodg'd, now hem the covert in and seize the prey. [*Three seize on Hero, the rest fight and disarm Armelius.*]

ARM. What rude assassin with gigantic step —

HERO. [*Kneeling.*] Help gracious powers, why sleep your awful bolts? behold the good old man in bondage base. Release him heav'n, protect his sacred life, and let a daughter's blood redeem her fire.

ARM. [*Struggling.*] Off, hell-hounds, off. Oh fate restore my youth, or arm invocate age to help my child.

1st RUFF. Convey the princess to a distant spot.

HERO. Down from your azure habitation look, some succouring god, to aid fair virtue's cause. Oh chaste Diana help a wretched maid; see now they break my hold—oh torture—death. [*Two Ruffians force her off, the rest secure Armelius.*]

ARM. Why is my span prolong'd to this curst hour. Unhand me slaves, and let me roam at large, I'll buy my freedom with a fulsome bribe.

Enter Leander.

LEAN. Why deadly moan doth pierce my giddy brain.—What, do I see, some poor old man beset! Out, fiery falchion, do thy master right, and tinge thy fatal edge in barb'rous gore. [*Draws, and beats them off.*]

ARM. Oh speak my, kind deliverer, whom thou art,

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art, for sure thou'rt more than mortal by the deed.
The gods in pity surely sent a friend, to whom
I'll pay my thanks on bended knee.

LEAN. Rise, grateful sir, to me no tribute's
due, such acts reward themselves with ample meed;
but say doth ought remain that man can do, and
task a stranger's sword to punish wrong.

ARM. My only consolation's forc'd away, the
virgin staff on which my years reclin'd; thro'
yonder vale they bore the trembling maid, whilst
I had nought to aid, but fruitless tears.

LEAN. Such case admits no pause, come trusty
steel :

Thou well try'd weapon now thy office do,
And tinge thy faithful point in crimson hue;
Minerva with success the fight shall crown,
And make my fame immortal as her own.

[Exit Leander.

ARM. Adieu, brave stranger, may the Athe-
nian maid, with her extended Ægis guard the
breast, from whence ethereal streams of goodness
flow, like purling nectar thro' the happy plains.
Attend ye gracious forms that shield the just, and
skreen the godlike youth from hostile rage. Oh
may no adverse powers retard his speed, to crush
oppression and its daring sons, but may swift pi-
nions waft his active limbs, and fate itself sit
heavy on his sword.—But what avails a daugh-
ter's life preserv'd, if that she lives alone to plague
her fire, and scorns all offers of parental love.
Heav'n in its mercy took her mother young. Oh
cou'd the silent grave retort her charge, she'd rend
her hair, and drown the earth with tears; curse
dread Lucina for her willing aid, and blame the
monster death that stood aloof, and spar'd her
youth to know a mother's pain.—Yet busy some-
thing

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thing pleads her cause again, and nature's tongue with elocution sweet, defends her stubborn inclination still. Each tender pang that wrecks my aged heart, sets forth my child in innocent array, and hails thee, lovely pity, for its mate. This medly war within distracts my mind, and while each passion with a rising gust, attacks each vital part with fiend-like rage, the tottering citadel to ruin falls, and yields a victim to domestic jars.

[Exit.

SCENE IV. *A distant part of the wood.*

Enter Leander and Hero, from among the trees.

HERO. My safety now permits my tongue to speak. Accept whatever a grateful heart can give. Oh let me pour forth thanks in torrents here, and bless the gallant arm that sav'd my life.

LEAN. Cease, gentle maid, such acts claim no desert, to duty's wholesome laws I bow a slave; and when th' impartial monitor within, with conscious approbation glads my soul, I call each pleasing impulse nobler meed, than tho' the world with loud applause should cry, Behold this man, the pride of all the globe, the man of men, Alcides great compeer.

HERO. Oh worthy man! Alas how few like thee, ascend the summit of fair virtue's hill. — But say what clime's made famous by thy birth?

LEAN. Born in Abydos' town I sought the court, where nauseous flattery quick promotion brings. Unskill'd to play the sycophant, I thought by honest means t' acquire the royal grace: but ah, deceiv'd I left th' ungrateful roof, resolv'd to hide the mark of past disgrace, and seek a shelter in a foreign realm.

C 2

HERO.

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HERO. The Thracian kingdom with extended arms, is well prepar'd to take the wretched in ; a sure retreat for every foe to guilt. But say, my friend, doth prince Leander live ; if ought thou know'st of him I'd gladly hear.

LEAN. He lives indeed, but lives to curse his fate ; his father's frown, his disappointed love, oppress the gallant youth, and bend him down. He scorns Sapphira and Abydos' crown, and cries, Ye gods, reserve this bauble earth, for moving clods, whose servile souls soar not to noble height ; enrich Leander with fair Hero's love, he asks no other boon your pow'r can give. I bear a letter to the royal maid, which moves his suit in such pathetic strains, might stop the grisly king of terror's hand, and charm the list'ning groves to hear him vow.

HERO. [*Aside.*] Eternal raptures dwell upon thy tongue, thou sing'st sweet musick to my languid soul, and every word speaks comfort to my love.—[*Turning to Leander.*] I am the princess Hero, gracious sir, whom your right arm preserv'd from rape or death. The king, my father much indebted stands to your brave arm that sav'd his aged life.—Your master's numbers, sir, I deign to view.—[*Aside.*] I'll greedy suck the pleasing poison in, and call each word a har-binger of joy.

LEAN. I left the paper in our tatter'd bark, and wander'd here to find some rural host. But every spot is sure alike to me, since great Leander still is sore oppress'd ; the grand pavilions echo back his groans, which pierce each hearer with the dismal sound ; the lofty walls rebreuit his dire complaint, and ev'ry neighbouring grotto loudly rings with repetition of fair Hero's name.

HERO.

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HERO. I saw the noble youth in rich array
embark from hence to great Abydos' town: me-
thought each look was borrow'd from a god, and
bounteous nature, lavish of her store, had drain'd
her hoard of sweets to furnish him.

LEAN. On suffering virtue some kind pity take,
and since all men allow him much desert, with
kind affection cheer his drooping soul, and gild
his morn of life with smiling rays.

HERO. 'Tis true thou plead'st thy cause to
partial ear, but ought I not to frown and bid thee
nay? I'm well inclin'd to salve his bleeding
wounds, but modest form enslaves a willing mind.
Yet hear me, stranger, hear me now protest, (and
spare the blush that paints my maiden cheek) none
e'er approach'd the worth of Omar's son.

LEAN. What dear delirium turns my doating
brain; those dazzling glories with propitious beams,
relume the dimming taper of my hope, and shew
the object of my wishes near. I am Leander,
born of royal race, and left my father's court in
this disguise. [*She turns aside.*] Hide not those
lamps of heav'n from my sight, the stars by
which the bark of love did steer. Oh make those
gems th' ambassadors of life, and stab me not
with each destructive glance. I left my native
home in quest of thee. The little graces fann'd
my silken sails.
Thro' boist'rous waves I boldly ventur'd o'er,
Thy eyes my pole-star, and thy heart my shore.

HERO. Thy late unsullied fame is blotted now,
nor can repentance wash the stains away. 'Twas
poor and base to cheat a harmless maid, and
draw th' unwary in by mean device.

LEAN. Now by thy snowy spotless soul I swear,
a madman's fury urg'd me to the deed.

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Whips, daggers, racks, are ecstacy divine,
E'en pain of hell is bliss compar'd to mine.

HERO. Can I to such offence speak mild rebuke, or vatnish o'er thy crimes and think thee just. Hence from my presence, cross the stormy deep; whilst I sequester'd from th' alluring court, will join a nymph in fait Diana's train.

LEAN. Oh, drive me not for ever from thy sight; there's even sweetness in thy angry frown: may fate for ever fix me to thy side; I'll sooth thy heavy wrath with tales of love, and lull thy troubled mind to soft repose.

HERO. Away, begone, nor tempt my patience more. This imposition turns regard to hate, and base Leander is no more my friend.

LEAN. I'll hear no more; what now but death remains, since all the gifts of Jove grow stale to me. Come forth thou trusty servant of my fame, I beg thy friendship, do thy office now, and know the present labour is thy last. [*Offers to kill himself. Hero wresteth the dagger.*]

HERO. Rash man, forbear, nor tempt thy sacred life. Thy dread attempt alarms my tender soul; receive whate'er with honour I can give, my lab'ring heart will burst with tort'ring woe, till thou, my prince, art reconcil'd to live.

LEAN. Thou pleasing brightness dost thou bid me live? Cure with thy healing words a dying man; if I survive I live for thee alone.

HERO. Now by the vital warmth that glads my breast, the ghost that hovers round the Stygian bank, no more desires the boat to waft him o'er, than I to call the great Leander, ^{mine} and yield him all that virtuous love affords.

LEAN. Whence do these sudden streams of goodness flow! but thou art all perfection, lovely maid.

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maid. Oh tell me, thou epitome of joy, how shall I e'er repay thy matchless love; but oh excess of blifs beguiles the time, thy father's near approach forbids the theme, and breaks our parley with his quick advance.

HERO. Soon as the morn unbars her purple gates, at Sestos' court appear like Omar's son.

The Sestian lords thy godlike mein shall see,
And ev'ry wond'ring subject gaze like me.

Enter Armelius.

ARM. Where is my daughter, where my rescu'd child? Fly to thy father's bosom and be blest. Receive my double thanks, thou godlike man; impose my power to find a meet return. But let us quickly leave this hateful place, thy radiant virtue will adorn the court, and neighbouring princes call me lucky host.

On to the palace, let the victims fall,
We'll thank the bounteous gods that sav'd us all.

[Exeunt Armelius and Hero.]

LEAN. She's gone, and left her loving mate alone. Apollo thus his genial heat withdraws, and raven down of darkness clouds the world.

Enter Soronnius.

SOR. Well met, my prince; I found a rural spot, with sylvan food by nature well supply'd, the homely dwelling of a simple clown, who to the goddess Ceres pays his vows, and deems our mother earth his best of friends.

LEAN. At length, Soronnius, I have met my wish, and from remorseless ruffians sav'd my love. I'll tell the story as we pass along. A gleam of
blifs

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bliss darts thro' my enraptur'd soul, I joy to think
our separation short.

Like waves divided by the silver oar,
We'll meet again — to separate no more.

[*Exeunt.*]

End of the Third Act.



ACT IV.

SCENE the First.

Scene the Palace of Sestos.

Enter Leander gorgeously appparelled, with Hero.

LEANDER.

SURE I am Disappointment's elder born,
and by succession must inherit woe. Have I
not sav'd thy cruel father's life, and will he tear
thee from my bleeding heart, and force thy will to
wed Persep'lis prince? When I demanded Hero
as a boon (ah pow'r supreme no greater gift can
give) he frowning cry'd, My royal word is past,
thy potent rival lights the yellow torch, and leads
my daughter to the bridal bed.

HERO. For each convulsive pang that shakes
thy soul I'll mix a tear, and make our grief com-
pleat: can I behold thy faith and think it feign'd?
yet

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yet blame me not for poverty of love; a fire's command alone restrains my choice.

LEAN. My life, my soul, my all's attach'd to thee. I'd leave the Paphian queen for Hero's charms. Remove thy scruples, ease a throbbing breast; dash my proud rival's hope, and cherish mine.

HERO. How shall I pay the mighty debt I owe, for all the tender care bestow'd on me; blame not the wretched bankrupt chance hath made. Cou'd I, my prince, reward thy generous flame, my heart wou'd leap half-way to meet thy love.

LEAN. Have I not broke down duty's pale for thee: witness ye shores how oft the murmuring sound of tyrant father cleft your fertile banks, how oft I curst Sapphira's rank and dow'r, and swore the world was vile, compar'd to thee.

HERO. Oh kill me not with kindness, gen'rous youth; for what thou now declar'st I fancy true.

LEAN. Each moment's precious while we parly thus; the day, thou rigid fair, is near at hand, when I shall view thee in my rival's arms. Then shall I lose the function of a man, the blazing taper of my life will dim, and poor Leander, like a tale that's told, shall pass unheard, neglected, and forlorn.

HERO. Hold not my garment, nor implore the aid you know my duty must refuse to give. Why will you strew destruction's path with flow'rs; for tho' thou drag'st me to the brink of fate, from whence to look will turn my frantic brain, I bless the darling author of my woe, and kiss thy friendly hand to push me down.

LEAN. Say that I rather came to save a maid, from one who poorly knows to rate her worth; from one who woo'd her with a statesman's view,
pleas'd

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pleas'd with the dazzling lustre of her crown :
there broods Destruction and it's dreary goal ;
there Fate and all its Horrors stand confest. Oh
let me snatch thee from the frightful steep, and
mark thy way through verdant meads of love.

HERO. Thy tender speech hath fix'd my doubt-
ful soul ; yet something sure is ominous within,
that checks my froward haste with keen reproach ;
my careful genius warns me off the ill, yet thou
shalt lead me wheresoe'er thou wilt. The tender
lambkin thus skips o'er the plain, fond of the
soothing of a flatt'ring priest, and with a pleasing
bleating seeks the shrine ; at length he yields his
little throat to death, falls by a sacred hand, and
sleeps in peace.

LEAN. Dash not my joy with such unholy
sounds. A good old father waits to make us one.
Dispel the gloomy vapours of thy mind. The sun
shall shine more bright to bless my fair, and Jove
himself look down to hear us vow. Soon the
meridian of bliss we'll reach, and in its happy
zenith fix our seat. A thousand laughing Cupids
shall attend, and draw our curtains with a sport-
tive smile.

HERO. I'll share thy fortune, oh thou wond'rous
man ; tho' hov'ring death shou'd shake his cruel
dart, my trembling feet shall ne'er recede
from thee.

On to the pleasing altar thus I move,
And varnish o'er my crime with fatal love :
Oh, Hymen, if from thence I ne'er return,
I'll make thy sacred fane my bridal urn.

[*Exeunt.*]

SCENE

SCENE II. *Scene the Palace Hall.**Enter Armelius and Altemanzor.*

ALT. I left a viceroy in Persp'lis town, expos'd my royal person to the deep, and pass'd a time of formal courtship here; and have I reap'd the fruit of all my toil: Shall I thro' dust scour o'er th' olympic plain, and strive to reach the goal with painful step, whilst a beholder with a scornful smile, shall snatch the noble palm, my vict'ry's due, and rob me of the glorious spoils I won.

ARM. I know thy ardent zeal, thy prefer'd love, and I believe thy every vow sincere: I begg'd thy friendship when I saw thy worth, and long'd to call thee by a name more dear.

ALT. What is the league, or sacred word of kings, if what they once affirm they dare recant, and stain their lips, the royal seals of truth. Is this the friendly part thou mean'st to act, to lead thy daughter to my rival's bed, and blight my new-blown hope by breach of faith.

ARM. This accusation wrongs me, royal sir; have I not giv'n thee proof to think me just. Leander's sword preserv'd my aged life, and in return my daughter Hero claim'd, with flat denial I the prince repuls'd, and check'd the rising flame that glow'd within.

ALT. Is it enough to say, Forbear rash man, to Altemanzor I bequeath my child. Have you not sworn yourself to aid my love, and bend the stubborn fair to hear my suit: Why then is Omar's son permitted here, to melt her maiden heart with tender sighs, to watch the pearly dew that wet her cheek, and in a fit of rapture kiss them dry.

ARM.

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ARM. Shou'd I forbid him, Sir, the Sestian court, Jove with hot bolts wou'd pierce my hoary head, and urge his wrathful peals to shake the realm.

ALT. Cou'd I persuade a king to spurn his friend, or like a viper sting the saving hand. Retain, oh royal sir, the noble youth, but lock up all admittance to the fair; prevent his wishes e'er he can demand. Let him stand first in order at the board; but when my yellow grains of corn grow ripe, and the capacious granary, my heart, with open doors prepar'd to take it in, let not a foreign reaper spoil my crop, or blast the promis'd harvest of my love.

ARM. I take this counsel, sir, in friendly part. I'll shortly fix an adamant bar, which if the furious boy shou'd dare to pass, and with gigantic valour soar aloft, to scale the highest heav'n of all his hope, I shall forget the gratitude I owe, and deem Persep'lis prince my proxy Jove, to hurl th' aspiring Titan to the earth, possess the heavenly throne and reign secure. [Exit.]

ALT. My well concerted project's at an end. The royal stranger's intervening sword preserv'd the maid, and baffled ev'ry snare. This pluming rival must not, shall not live: cou'd I remove this Dæmon from the earth, and send him down below with fiery speed, perhaps the princess may relent and love. If I can trust to what the whispering court, and what report now rumour far abroad, he was her early flame. I'll press the king once more to urge his stay; by seeming friendship I'll escape suspect. But can I dare to ape the pow'r supreme, and steal the grand prerogative of Jove? shall I deform this beauteous comely clay, and rob mankind of such a goodly prince?

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prince? Why do I dubious stand, or scruple
ought, since all mankind are by profession rogues?
Th' assiduous statesman, wise in learn'd debate,
in midnight council wastes the gloomy lamp, and
swears the common weal is near his heart; yet
inward leers at each believing fool, and robs the
sinking store to make him great. No squeamish
virtue stops the greedy priest, who robs the gay-
deck'd shrine, and mocks the god.

Endymion's beauty robb'd the world of light,
And stole the pale wan rays that gild the night.
The smitten goddess left her sphere above,
Drawn by th' attractive pow'r of thievish love,
Th' enamour'd prize obtain'd, th' exulting boy
Plumes in his theft, and gives a loose to joy.

[Exit.

SCENE III. *Scene an inward part of the
temple at some distance from the palace.*

Enter Leander and Hero, as from the altar.

LEAN. Still must I call thee lovely, cruel maid;
why flow those fullen tears to chill my bliss, now
when the holy priest hath made us one. The
sacred altar echo'd back our vows, while guardian
angels, hov'ring round the fane, with clapping
pinions hail'd the happy tie.

HERO. What pleasing shadows dance before
thy eyes? Let not thy nimble fancy thus delude,
nor, like a glow-worm, draw thee from thy way.
I shudder at the hasty deed we've done; such rash
and speedy contracts seldom thrive. Alas! I
fear we're bound to dangerous seas, and cruel
fate's prepar'd to launch our bark; my soul
divines

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divines the adverse quicksands near, and fortune's whirlpool with extended jaws in fraudulent eddies seems to play around.

LEAN. Fear not my penfive fair, but clear thy brow, and with a draught of gladness cheer thy heart: erect on virtue's wing we'll brave our fate. But say my love, my wife, my precious all, now by this little spot whereon we stand, that holds a gem more dear than conquer'd worlds, what envious care disturbs thy bosom thus; what haggard sprite with baleful pow'r of hell congeals the sacred stream of nuptial joy.

HERO. My prince, my lord, my husband, share my grief, or the dejected mourner pines away. Soon as the priest had join'd my trembling hand, and my fond doating eyes were bent on thine, unusual horror seiz'd my drooping soul; my throbbing heart a sudden fear confest, and all my quivering limbs with terror shook. Soon as the good old man began the rites, I thought the temple from its basis torn, and ghastly yellings fill'd the spacious dome. Far in a distant corner I survey'd a huge faint fiery ball, a pallid mass, which to a liquid straitway did dissolve, and form'd a little sea of boist'rous waves: amidst the flood a floating corse appear'd, the king of terrors strok'd it's downy cheek, and wove an icy crown to bind it's head. This gorgon sight I fear'd wou'd strike me dead, so turn'd my eyes to heav'n to beg relief, when turning back I found the phantom fled, the vision vanish'd, and was seen no more.

LEAN. Let not thy dreaming fancy thus affright. Hence, hence, chiméras, to your parent clouds, and every inauspicious foe be dumb. The Gods that gave us life may give us peace, or if we bear a galling load of woe, let us be curst by fate and
not

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not by vice. Upborn by innocence we'll stand the shock, and when th' almighty hand decrees our doom, we'll kiss the fatal rod, and sleep secure.

HERO. Tho' I betray'd the woman, blame me not, our coward souls are form'd in softer moulds; but now thy breath a new-felt ardour gives, my breast with fire heroic seems to glow; I feel an active particle within. By thy example warm'd, I scorn my fears, and trust our cause to heav'n to do us right.

LEAN. Can care or discontent invade our bed? We have amass'd a mighty store of love, enough to bless the waining days of life. The thrifty bee with careful foresight thus, culls the Hyblaean sweets for future need, and fills her frugal hive with winter food. But soft, I hear the tread of feet without; it is Persep'lis prince; retire my love, I pray thee shun my rival's busy eyes. A thousand pains are in the word farewell. I lose Elysium when I part with thee,

So when some god 'midst all th' etherial crowd,
Has sworn by gloomy Styx, and broke his word,
Remote from banquet, there condemn'd to stay,
He drooping seeks the dreary, dreadful way.
For one last look he turns his longing eye,
With eager view beholds the starry sky.
The thoughts of heaven he lost, distract his mind,
And mourns the blissful regions left behind.

[Exit Hero.]

Enter Altemanzor.

[Leander retires to the back part of the stage.]

ALT. Sure 'twas the very cozenage of sight, or I beheld

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beheld the beauteous royal maid. Some wild disorder ruffled ev'ry grace. What fiendlike passion shakes that tender frame, like to a pliant tree on Hæmon's top, disturb'd by every rising gust of wind. [*Seeing Leander.*] And see Abydos' prince, the cause of all : I mark his ev'ry look, and read success. His fervent soul elate on happy plumes, in silent language speaks her blissful state. [*To Leander.*] How comes it, sir, that when the gaudy court, in gladsome measures beat the burden'd ground; when Sestos' king, with all mankind at peace, applauds the gen'ral mirth with gracious smile, that you with moody discontent array'd, with low'ring features seek some sad retreat, and dim your vital sun with pensive cloud.

LEAN. What! shall the reign of pleasure know no end, but fix her constant seat like tow'ring Jove? Do not the gods some adoration claim; shall their neglected temples want their fire, and impious man forget to feed the flame?

ALT. No more of this untimely moral speech; a priest's device to cheat the gaping croud. Each poor oblation laid before the shrine, deludes thy busy toil like fleeting shades; for lo, thy angry goddess left her fane, her glaring eye-balls spoke the wrathful dame, and angry clouds o'erspread her gloomy brow.

LEAN. You're pleasant, sir; but mirth's a foe to me: my lab'ring soul, replete with doleful guests, no room hath left to lodge the smiling queen. I now commend you to the guardian gods, that rule this holy shrine with righteous sway, intreating heav'n to hear each pious vow, I bid farewell.

ALT. So guilt, and all its train, abhorring day, now

wou'd gladly hide their heads in nightly shade,
and in the realm of darkness fix abode.

LEAN. And dost thou join Leander's name
with guilt; stain his unfullied fame with impious
blot, and blast his rising youth with forg'd con-
ceit: I challenge Jove to view my inmost thoughts,
expose my naked soul to human view, and punish
every crime that's harbour'd there.

ALT. Rash man desist, nor tempt the pow'r
supreme to view the latent channels of thy mind,
and mark the guilty streams that roll along.
Would'st thou not rob the garden of my love,
and crop the choicest flow'r with lawless hand?
Have I obtain'd the king's consent for this? for
this with pure affection woo'd the maid? are these
the deeds that crown Abydos' prince, and yield
perpetual empire to his name?

LEAN. You are transported; bid the tempest
calm, and let fair reason lull the raging storm.
I'll clear your erring judgment, royal sir. Exa-
mine then; I'll render up account:—Such rays of
comfort chear my harmless mind, I trust my ho-
nest cause to partial ear.

ALT. Think not to 'scape revenge by gilded
speech, thou foulest fiend, thou casuist of hell;
thy subtle wiles have crush'd my fairest hope.
Here, in the awful presence of the gods, abjure
thy love, nor see the princess more; or by yon
azure dome I loudly swear, Erinnys fierce shall shake
her iron whip; Alecto's arm shall grasp thy tremb-
ling soul, and drag thee howling to the shades below.

LEAN. Cease, pompous boaster, thou vain-glo-
rious prince, thy airy threats declare thy coward
mind. I'd not defile this hallow'd shrine with
blood; a crimson incense ill becomes the fane:
but mark me well, great sir, unblemish'd fame can
never brook a false malicious stab, tho' 'tis a royal
weapon deals the wound: and if thy lavish words
traduce my name, or flaw the gem I most on

D

earth

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earth adore, I'll nobly fall; and court a glorious grave; or bear the reeking trophies on my sword.

ALT. Fool-hardy youth, to cope with force divine. The gods themselves are authors of our race; vain as thy love, thy rage oppos'd is vain. Yet if thy crime dissuadeth thee from life, and this sad world affords no ease to guilt, shake off thy load of thought, and perish here. [*Draws.*]

LEAN. And shall thy boist'rous tongue defame a prince, and curse the man that never meant thee wrong: hence peace, and all your gentle sons be gone, and dread resentment arm my fiery steel. [*Draws.*] Come on, brave sir, and face an injur'd youth. Resolv'd I stand to risk the fatal chance, and thus I throw the die. [*They fight. Altemanzor falls.*]

ALT. Curse on thy skilful arm that pierc'd my heart. The purple flood deserts my shiv'ring trunk, t' enrich this hateful land that gave me death. Death! What is death? The priests and poets frame Elysian bow'rs, the Stygian lake and sulph'rous pools below; perhaps a tale to cheat the vulgar herd, a knave's device to gull and draw them in. Life ebbs apace, I can conjecture nought; my eye-strings fail, and darkness hovers round. Oh, may I mingle with my mother earth, and in a second chaos lose my soul. [*Dies.*]

Enter Armelius and Amorissa.

ARM. Sure Altemanzor fought the temple door—

AMOR. [*interrupting.*] What do I see! a pale dead corpse in regal habit clad.

ARM. Oh, 'tis Persep'lis prince, my better self. Ill fated man; what cruel barb'rous hand hath damp'd thy vital morn with crimson dew. Oh that my tears were balm to heal the wound; oh that my breath cou'd call thee back to life. But soft, a truce with unavailing grief; see the relentless homicide appears, grown big with conquest o'er his royal foe.—[*To Leander.*] Hast thou

not

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not robb'd me of the best of friends, defil'd the sacred fane with floating gore, and shock'd my peaceful realm with bloody broil? Thou hast seduc'd my child to crown thy crime (for so the whispering courtiers dare affirm) entrapp'd her easy heart with flatt'ry's bait, and won the maid by base concerted snare. Seduction, murder, cruelty, are thine. Where shines thy former lustre, impious man! inveil'd with crimes, thy worthy deeds are hid, nor can repentance clear the gloomy cloud. Oh had we fell by base assassin's stab, e'er ow'd our safety to a wretch like thee.

LEAN. 'Tis true, your pow'r's o'er all the Sestian coast, and one poor word may doom Leander dead. But hear me, sir, I am not us'd to sue, my haughty mind disdains to beg for life; firm on it's basis scorns thy utmost hate, and seeks acquaintance with her kindred sky. Hear what I now proclaim, and seal my fate. Persepolis prince, for lewd reviling fam'd, deriding gods their worship, and their shrines, here near the altar vow'd revenge on me: I ask'd my crime, he answer'd, Hero's love; then call'd me base betrayer, virgin thief. At length the mighty ocean of my rage o'erflowing reason's banks, no more was rul'd; my glitt'ring steel pursu'd the rival heart, the daring prince oppos'd, and courted death. Your daughter, sir, approv'd my gen'rous flame; our fortunes now are rivetted in one, and you the star to sway our future lives.

ARM. Hence from my sight, and cross the briny main, or quick destruction brands thy hated head. May all the gods, with one united will, with rumbling peals affright thy guilty soul, and pay thy daring crimes with sudden death. — [*To Amorissa.*] Close on the margin of the foaming sea, where furious Neptune spends his wat'ry rage, hard of access, there stands a lofty tow'r, bid to the world a final last farewell, for as you share

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the council of your friend, that gloomy dome's the
only gift I give. There both sequester'd from the
sight of man,

Explore the dreary walls with fell despair,
By heav'n and earth forsook, grow wan with care,
Distracted woo your fate, and perish there. }

[Exit.]

LEAN. Go, precious madman, how I envy thee;
the world's a price too mean for rage like thine.
I'd pawn my soul for fury to my wish. I brave
thee, fortune, and defy thy pow'r: I bore the
heat of thy malicious wrath, now lay thy needless,
empty quiver by.

AMOR. Be calm, sweet prince, consult the
way to peace, nor let wild raving mar the joys in
store. I'll to Soronnus, and prepare the bark,
then with your royal spouse the tower seek. The
narrow sea an easy pass admits; high on the spire
I'll fix a guiding light, a flaming pilot to the
coast of love. Each night with lusty sinews dash
the waves, and when on Neptune's wat'ry breast
reclin'd, be each rude gust in gloomy caverns
pent, and gentle calms o'erspread the friendly deep.

LEAN. Thou counsel'st well: I'll leave ungrate-
ful man, and call the main an element of love.
I'll steal each night to view my precious hoard,
and e'er the morning dawns return with woe.

The cautious miser thus forsakes his bed,
Soon as the globe's with raven down o'erspread,
With silent speed he seeks the much-lov'd shore,
Whose bowels hold his shining mass of ore;
Banquets his longing eyes with greedy view,
And pays his yellow god with tribute due.
But when Aurora mounts her saffron car,
And puts to speedy flight each fading star,
With fear and awe the tremb'ler hastes away,
Abhors the light, and loaths the breaking day.

[Exeunt.]

End of the Fourth Act.

A C T V.

SCENE I. *A castle near the Abydinian shore.**Enter Omar and Captain of the guards.*

OMAR.

THE prince, my son, hath left Abydos' shore, and sought the Sestian coast in fullen mood. The malecontent wou'd sure new-mould the state, and court a foreign queen to govern here, I'll check this wild career of stubborn youth, and force the boy to know no will but mine.

CAPT. The fair Sapphira's beautiful in tears, her struggling heart's o'erflown with pearly dew, beneath her fate the virgin victim falls; the lovely rainbow now is seen no more, that us'd to cheer the mourning maid to love.

OMAR. With royal pow'r I'll glad her drooping heart, dispel her gloomy heav'n and clear the sky. With seeming friendship I'll entreat my son to quit the Thracian realm, and share my crown. Dispatch a pompous bark for Sestos' town, the aspiring youth, perch'd on ambition's wing, will fly to grasp the game with greedy beak; then shall my wrathful heat melt ev'ry plume, and urge the soaring novice with it's rays. Soon as he hails the Abydinian shore, expecting joy from every greeting friend, seize on his royal person with a guard. Here let th' imprison'd youth with anguish mourn, while you your constant vigils keep around, and intercept a passage to his speech.

OMAR. [*Alone.*] A goodly basis — so I ground my hopes. Confinement, anger, threats, and all their train, may much effect where milder measures fail; his haughty soul ill brooks oppression's

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hand. The boy disdainful of a regal rein, wou'd chuse his pace, and cater for himself. The royal cub no more shall roam at large, no more shall stalk the spacious forest round, but lowly bow a slave to just constraint, and chain'd with potent fetters hug his den. Am I a king adopted by the gods, heav'n's viceroy here, to rule my people with despotic sway, and shall my threats like baubles be despis'd? But here parental right makes strong my claim. And shall a subject son confront my pow'r, and break down duty's fence with rebel hands?

Enter Captain.

CAPT. Most mighty king, the prince my lord's arriv'd; by your command made bold, I seiz'd his sword. Disdain, rage, madness, with alternate rule, distract his lab'ring breast, and tear the soul.

OMAR. Let him then enter. [*Exit Captain.*] Now the dreadful shock draws near, to shew my firm resolve, and pass his doom.

Enter Leander with Captain and Guard.

LEAN. To great Abydos' king I make appeal, to you I bow a subject and a son. Now by a mother's ashes I conjure, by that blest she that fill'd your royal arms, to say the fatal cause of this disgrace:—Step'd not I forth to save your sinking state, and swam thro' crimson billows for it's good? Have I not train'd the hardy youth to arms, and fir'd each gallant soul with daring feats? And shall the meed of bondage crown your chief? Is shame a wreath to crown the victor's brow?

OMAR. Why fled Leander this his native soil? Why scorn'd Sapphira, and her matchless charms? Oh, guilty youth, thou wreck'st my aged heart. But hence affection and her tender train. I drown the father in Lethæan stream: and lo! the monarch

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narch stands with threat'ning frown, to scourge the traitor for his vaunting crimes.

LEAN. Tho' you was center'd in the pith of pow'r, and arm'd like tow'ring Jove with pow'r supreme, I'd bide the pelting of your pitiless wrath, e'er wed the maid my soul can ne'er approve. I left this hateful land to view my love; and when this heart applauds a second flame, may gods above and shoals of fiends below, plunge my devoted ghost in seas of fire, where goblins damn'd, with hideous shriek shall cry, Behold the base Leander and his end.

OMAR. You seem resolv'd, brave sir, to court your fate.—[*To the Captain.*] Hence, place a chosen guard within the walls; the prince, your royal pris'ner, now confin'd, to all access deny'd, shall linger here. [Exit Omar.]

LEAN. Wou'd I cou'd here tear off all filial ties, and curse the tongue that severs me from joy; far from the casket that contains my store. Madness is calm, compar'd with rage like mine; ten thousand Etna's burn within my veins; distraction, fury, fire my kindled mind. Alcides tortur'd with th' envenom'd shirt, might smile in pain, and pity Omar's son. Oh, for a long, long sleep to ease my brain. Remembrance cease to probe my ulcerous breast. Oh, for a state of annihilation now.—Base frantic man, wou'd'st thou forget thy fair? No—memory hold thy seat, conception stay, and through the windows of thy dear abode, indulge my sickly fancy with a view; let me behold that lovely angel's form, then sigh one last adieu and sink to rest.

CAPT. I am your creature, sir, your lowly slave; tho' certain death attends, this night's your own; tho' your dread father shakes his iron-rod, I grant a speedy freedom to my prince. Sure heav'n itself approves the pious fraud, and earth and men must plaud an act like mine.

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LEAN. I'll have no more to do with earth or men, nor will I long survive this hateful hour. Come, generous darkness, spread thy dusky veil, then will I woo the briny main to peace; but if with fathers, friends, and all combin'd, the fatal deep conspires against my love, thro' the Galaxy I will wing my way, my glowing soul shall scorch it's milky road, and with a vast explosion rend the clouds. Fly from your chrystal hinges, heav'nly doors; I'll pull the thunderer trembling from his throne, and be myself the minister of fate. I'll bind Sol's horses with Minerva's zone, and from their nostrils catch the falling flame. I'll drain the Empyreum for it's fiery balls,

Which shall from Pelion's lofty top be hurl'd,
And with a conflagration blast the world. [*Exeunt.*]

SCENE II. *The Tower on the Sestian Shore.
An inward Apartment.*

HERO. [*On a couch.*] Oh, tardy Morpheus, oh thou lagging god, why dost thou now withdraw thy balmy aid. Wilt thou refuse to close the royal eyes, yet yield refreshing sleep to lull the clown? Oh, partial deity, to fly me thus, yet fan a peasant with thy downy wings, and sooth each ruffled sense to sweet repose. Oh, now I feel thy unexpected help; come gentle slumber, come thou bounteous friend, and in thy feather'd bosom wrap thy charge; stroak with composing hand my care-sick soul, while soft oblivion steals me from myself. [*Sleeps.*]

[*Enter Amorissa.*]

AMOR. Asleep so soon, it moves my wonder nought; to grief and love all hours are the same. Oh, may no barbarous wind disturb the torch; oh, may it shine and dart refulgent rays, like to the orient glory of the sun.

HERO.

HERO. [*Asleep.*] Cease, cease, Sapphira, leave thy fawning art; no more fond leering smiles, but leave my love. Oh, that bewitching look, that tender glance caught his unwary eyes, and stole his soul! Rust, envied loadstone, lose magnetic pow'r. Turn thee, Leander, clear thee of thy crime; I know thee false, but yet my jealous ear absorbs his whispers in it's greedy pore, and my poor heart forgives the lovely prince.

AMOR. Accustom'd wildness fills her doating brain, imagin'd cause of sorrow drinks her blood, and preys rapacious o'er the royal frame.

HERO. [*Asleep.*] Mark how she eyes him to Abydos' strand; with tears entreats him not to venture o'er. But oh! the dear, relenting, faithful man forsakes the land to gain the middle stream. Ah!—this Medusa sure will strike me dead.—There crackt the cordage of the royal bark, the maple beams to atoms are dissolv'd; my consort's frail life like a bubble breaks, quickly to vanish and be mix'd with air. [*Awakes.*] Say do I wake, my generous watchful friend; whence flows this icy tremor o'er my joints; what chilly damp these frightful dreams procure; methinks I see his much-lov'd golden locks, moist and dishevell'd with the dripping brine.

AMOR. Recall your scatter'd spirits and be calm; the drowsy god creeps o'er each lazy sense, and thousand mimic forms make up his train; in different shapes they cozen and delude, and with their gloomy horror shake the soul.

HERO. Lend me thy arm, I need a staff like thee. Oh! Amorissa! cou'dst thou turn thy eye, to view the tortures of my panting heart, cou'dst thou behold the driving storm within, the doubts, the hopes, the fears that harbour there, th' alternate pangs that gall my inmost self, thy tender soul wou'd melt into a dew, and piteous drops o'erspread thy downy cheek.

AMOR.

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AMOR. What hellish blindness cou'd traduce my pow'rs, what more than magic dim my feeble sight ; cou'd I not read the anguish of my friend : desponding fair one, raise thy drowned hope, devour the thoughts of near approaching joy. Imagine dear Leander on the way ; perhaps the silver dolphins of the flood, believe that Neptune's lost the briny rule, and hail Leander sovereign of the main ; the gazing mermaids praise their new made prince, and all assist to waft him on his way.

HERO. Thou striv'st to cheer, I thank thee for thy pains ; perhaps he may, perhaps he may not come : when will th' event be seen. Time like a tardy cripple seems to limp, and with his leaden feet makes slow advance. The hours, Jove's offspring, wrapt in slumber stand, nor with a speedy progress glad my soul.

AMOR. Fly, fly, ye minutes, fly like winged winds, till Omar's son is safe and landed here. May dark obscurity o'ershade the globe, the sun shrink back, nor blaze to light the world ; celestial planets hide their sinking heads, all still as death, all silent as the night ; not one rude gust to shake your blissful scene, while he remains in this our poor abode ; then be each laughing moment slow as now. But from the summit of yon craggy rock, soon as the infant day salutes mankind, and glads the blushing east with breaking beams, may your Leander find a quick return ; and on the plumes of expedition borne, swifter than thought, more swift than Maia's son (who with ambrosial pinions cuts the air) greet, undiscover'd, his dear native land.

HERO. Receive what thanks a heart like mine can give, what an imprison'd princess can bestow. Alas ! that word recalls a load of shame ; for whom art thou depriv'd of ease but me ? Whose folly sold thy freedom but my own ? Art thou not sever'd from the earth and man, deny'd free commerce

merce with the social race, thy youth and beauty
barter'd for a tow'r, immur'd therein to spend thy
vernal bloom? Shalt thou behold thy aged parents
more? Art thou not doom'd to spend life's last
remains, and bear a mass of moody discontent?
Say who's the cause, and most accurs'd effect?
Was not my love the source of all thy woes?
Was not my rashness cause of all thy ills, and
overwhelm'd thee in the waves of grief.

AMOR. For me it matters not, my fortune still
has e'er been join'd to yours; with equal temper
bearing good and ill, I shar'd my princess' fate
without regret. Now by Abydos' prince, by that
brave youth that won your royal heart, I here
avow, I'd yield my life a ransom for your peace.
Wou'd heav'n smile on the pair, protect ye still,
and grant a prosperous harvest to your love, I'd
think my life cheap price to buy the gift, and arm
my faithful breast to meet the blow.

HERO. Words are too poor an offering, gene-
rous friend; but I alas! have nothing more to give.
Ah me—the madding winds come howling round,
and kiss the turret's top with rumbling lips; shiver-
ing they force thro' every rotten chasm, and hew
an entrance thro' each hollow chink. How fares
the torch, that harbinger of joy; I fear it's
friendly light is quite extinct. Oh! partly dire, to
cause oblivion thus. Hast thou not, Venus, sent
thy wanton dove, to hover o'er my torch with
careful wing, a precious lanthorn for the guide of
love? Haste, Amorissa, if there ought remains,
if cruel fate doth not precede my thought, save
from the raging storm this light divine. [*Exit*
Amorissa.]

HERO. Oh! wretched woman, not to dread
mishaps; what tho' the streams of air in silence
flow'd, nor breath'd a whisper to alarm my fear,
shou'd I not have prevented chance itself, and
with my garment kept the pilot flame. From
yonder

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yonder window I'll survey the main. [*Goes to the window.*] Ah! all is horrid dark and dismal there. [*Returns to the front of the stage.*] Th' affrighted moon withdraws her silver beams, and begs the gloomy clouds to veil her round. The lurking stars, heav'n's lamps, appear extinct, no more Apollo feeds their golden urns. The funeral bird sits brooding o'er the roof, with dreadful shrieks foreboding woes to come. But hark, the death-watch ticks in equal time, and cruel fate hath wound it up for me.

Enter Amorissa.

AMOR. Help me, ye gracious pow'rs, support my limbs; oh for a moment grant me vig'rous youth, till I relate this dismal, unheard tale, then rend my heart, and leave this wretched world.

HERO. What means thy broken voice, thy fault'ring tongue?

AMOR. First I'll call home sweet reason to my aid, for moon-struck frenzy's sanity to mine. [*Pauses a little.*] Groping I reach'd the turret's lofty top, and found the light extinct which I relum'd, when looking down I saw Leander's coarse; the barbarous billows wash'd his faithful cheeks, and the rude tempest maim'd the floating trunk.

HERO. Then welcome death, I kiss thy balmy spear, no cruel parents e'er shall part us more. The chains of Erebus are not so strong as those firm bonds that bind my love and me. I find the grisly king will hear my suit; for lo my eyes already seem to close, and leaden sleep hangs heavy on their lids. Waft me, ye zephyrs, to th' Elysian bow'rs, for there my lov'd Leander sure must dwell. Jove, with some new-born Leda gone to sin, approves Leander viceroy of the gods. And see he comes with haste to bring me o'er; mark how th' ætherial chariot moves along, tis sparkling sapphire studded o'er with gems.

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We're now arriv'd. This landskip sure must prove
The fragrant, fair, enchanting land of love.
Here sweet cascades of water ever roll'd
O'er orient pearls, and glittering sands of gold,
With gentle force thro' arching rocks they glide,
O'er flow'ry lawns convey the murm'ring tide.
See cliffs of purple amethysts are seen,
And myrtle bow'rs that boast immortal green.
Fix'd by the hand of fate, no more we'll rove,
But place our seats in this delightful grove.

[*Exeunt.*]

SCENE III. *The Palace of Omar, near the Sea.*

Enter Omar, speaking to an Officer.

OMAR. How say you, sir, the prince's garment
found, carelessly scatter'd o'er the temple floor;
and he conceal'd, or broke his prison house?

OFF. I did, my lord; but ah! that's trivial
news. I have a dagger-tale to pierce your ear;
I saw a pale wan coarise half o'er the sea, and much
I fear it is the prince your son.

OMAR. Thy words are sharp convulsions to
my soul. Oh! I have done a deed that goads me
now: relentless Omar kill'd his only son!

OFF. Dread sir, call up each latent pow'r to
aid. I have a tale will split your brain with
horror. Oh! that the ungrateful office were not
mine: but ah! your lamp of life is near burnt
out, a few more moments pass, and you're
no more.

OMAR. Leave off th' ambiguous phrase, and
instant speak.

OFF. The Captain, my base friend, that watch'd
the prince, by his entreaty won, quick freedom
gave to pass the foaming surge to Sestos' shore.
But fearing death wou'd follow breach of trust,
in a tall bark contriv'd his own escape; and to
prevent a quick, direct pursuit, prepar'd strong
poison for Abydos' king, and brib'd a trusty slave
to

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to give the dose: thinking the courtiers on your fate intent, forgetting all in such confused hours (the state disjointed, off the hinges torn) wou'd give fair means to let the villain fly.

OMAR. Whence or from whom learnt thou this dismal tale?

OFF. The slave that gave the dose told all to me, then sheath'd a fatal poniard in his heart.

OMAR. Alas! 'tis true indeed. I burn, I blaze, oh! what a scorching summer's in my breast. Come friendly winter, with thy icy robes, thrust in thy hand to cool my parching maw. Call in my friends—What ho—who waits without.

Enter Lords, Attendants, &c.

Let fair Sapphira wear Abydos' crown.
Forgive the guilty wretch that wrought my death.

1st LORD. Ah me! what means the king?

OFF. He dies by poison, but the cause is fled.

OMAR. Oh! I cou'd wallow in eternal snow, ay or dwell naked in perpetual frost. The Lemnian forge is Caucasus to me. Oh! I cou'd free Prometheus from his rock, to steal this kindled flame that glows within. On to my couch, life's several functions fail, my red hot virals are to embers turn'd, and all my entrails crumbled into dust. [*Exit leaning on his Attendants.*]

SCENE the last. Armelius's Palace at Sestos.

Enter Armelius with a Letter.

ARM. This from a creature of Persep'lis prince, hir'd to attack us in the gloomy wood, and force my daughter to his master's arms. I find I cherish'd venom in my breast, and sure the infectious wound had deadly been, had not Leander like the best of men, expell'd its rancour with preserving hand. I now must call this youth my guardian
god,

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god, and send a vessel o'er the narrow sea, to bring this blest perfection to my arms. I'll to my daughter, burst the tower gates, breathe such sweet gales of pardon in her soul, comfort my only forlorn mourning child, and raise her from the earth to love and empire.

Enter Amorilla.

AMOR. Now weep indeed, you miserable sire, for sure your urn of grief must now run o'er. Leander swimming from his native shore, resolv'd to combat with the angry waves, to visit Hero and compleat his love, by cruel fate oppress'd, was quickly drown'd.—From the high turret I've survey'd the coast; my frantic mistress beat her lab'ring breast, then bent her eyes upon the stormy deep, and cry'd, Chide not my prince, for lo I come. E're my officious haste cou'd stop the deed, the daring princess sought the fatal deep.

ARM. Where are those pleasing jocund visions now, that swell'd my rising breast with eager joy? Now death and sorrow spread their dusky sheets. Farewell to empire, and the race of men. Retir'd to some dark cave I'll vent my grief, a poor attonement for a murder'd child; then by the light of one dim gloomy torch waste the remains of this poor thread of life, moulder to dust, and yield a prey to woe. *[Exit.]*

AMOR. From this mishap let cruel parents know, What pardon they to erring children owe.— Beware ye fathers of the Sestian land, Be kind, nor punish with an iron hand: Dismiss your wrath, be each offence forgiv'n, Nor steal the grand prerogative of heav'n. *[Exit.]*

End of the Fifth Act.

LEANDER and HERO.
EPILOGUE.

TO you, fair nymphs, our trembling bard must come,
Your smiles or frowns must seal his speedy doom.
Our luckless Author heard some Critic say,
I'll muster friends to damn the new-wrote Play!
Cold drops of sweat his trembling joints o'erspread,
Alas! he faints, and hangs his drooping head.
Say, surly commentators at the helm,
What! no compassion in a christian realm?
Well; e'er we talk of death, or funeral day,
Attend awhile to what the Ladies say;
'Tis in their breasts the grand Arcanum's found,
To raise a sinking Poet from the ground:
Their smiles, like Æsculapius, strength restore,
And add new life to every weaken'd pore.
Retire then, Female Jury, from the Hall,
Since by your Verdict we must stand or fall.
If by strict Drama's rule you can't defend,
At least for pity's sake appear the friend,
And to the Court for mercy recommend,
But if some frowning Lads will not agree,
This first offending piece shou'd venial be;
Persist, brave Damsels, save my endanger'd fame,
And to your own opinion starve the Dame.

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